

Workforce Partnership of Greater Rhode Island

Strategic Development Meeting

May 15, 2009

Present: Paul Harden, Jane Nugent, Susan O'Donnell, Fred Ricci, Nancy Roderick, Bob Cooper Kim Weiss

Guests: Wendy Mackie, Mavis McGetrick

Staff: Christine Grieco, Jen Cornwell, Lisa Rose

Absent: Everett Amaral, Betty Pleacher, Allen Durand

With a quorum present, Chairman Paul Harden called the meeting to order at 8:35 AM and asked members to review the minutes of the March 20, 2009 meeting.

VOTE: Fred Ricci moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Susan O'Donnell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

ISDI Presentation

Wendy Mackie of MY TURN Rhode Island gave an overview of the Marine Trades Industry. The Industry is slowly coming back form the economic hit it has taken. Some of the larger employers are beginning to rehire employees. New England Boatworks is coming

back from layoffs and a terrible fire.

The employers that have had multiple income streams have fared better than others. The manufacturing companies with more than one product line have weathered the storm. One of the companies makes more affordable high-end musical instruments like cellos and violins, some of which were played at the presidential inauguration.

Thirteen jobs have been listed on their website that are not really seasonal but jobs requiring more skills.

MY TURN has a presence in the Pawtucket, Providence, West Warwick and the Newport netWORKri offices. They are supposed to be at each office once a month but do not waste time if there are no appointments set up by the managers. Therefore they have not been in the offices as often as they would like. There has been a learning curve in working with the netWorkri centers. Methods and relationships should continue to improve.

There was discussion about concerns regarding the Newport netWorkri office and that there is an ongoing issue about increasing the open time of the office in Newport. The committee continues to be concerned about the hours and open time and staff or lack thereof in that office. Nancy Roderick suggested that the Committee go on record as desiring to see some kind of timeline, strategic plan or something dealing with the Newport issue in a timely manner. Most of

the new staff hired has been placed in Pawtucket and Providence due to the greatest need there according to Kim Weiss.

Wendy continued that other employers are speculating that they will have openings. One of those is Blount Boats in Warren. They are looking for 2-3 entry level welders whom they could train and then they speculate hiring up to 8 by December.

Seven employers are currently using training dollars. There are now 30 workers utilizing those funds. An example of the training being provided is seen at Goetz Custom Technologies. Goetz is training on robotics, has hired 6 workers and expects to hire 6 more. They are projecting to build 312 boats. They will be teaching people to program the robots to build carbon fiber boats. When this is fully operational, 4000 man-hours per boat will be saved.

MY TURN is capping the amount of training money to be used by each company at \$50,000 so that more employers will benefit.

IYRS has a ten-day introductory course which can expand into a 6 week paid training program for WIA youth in Bristol. There are the younger 14 and 15 year olds employed in the summer program. The middle piece handles the older youth. The Intro to Marine trades course was not run the past two times because there was no hiring going on. They plan to run it in January. More students are participating at Mount Hope HS and they expect to expand that

program.

Jen Cornwell said that 460 youth have attended the guest speaker presentations. 150 youth have gone on the marine trades field trips. 20 workshops have been held.

It is expected that the industry will recover and in 3-5 years there will be a skill gap unless people are exposed to these marine trades. The attempt is to be proactive in preventing that gap. MY TURN is also active all over the state.

The Governor's Workforce Partnership has funded four ISDI grants. It is also funding a Regional Skills Alliance and Newport Regional Skills Alliance. They are watching a program in Newport where there is development and training in Long Term Care, Hospitality Trades and Marine Trades. If this works it will be very attractive. There needs to be more discussion about regional skills development all over Rhode Island, possibly having bundles similar to this previous one. Northern Rhode Island is especially difficult. Something is blocking thinking about development of the valley area. A different strategy or way of thinking needs to be put into action. There was also discussion about job and business development on Aquidneck Island.

Jen Cornwell came before the Committee to ask for a vote on re-funding grants for next year for two ISDI partners. MY TURN and

Tech Collective grants will expire this summer.

She requested the Strategic Development Committee give permission to take it to the full Board and then the GWB and ask for re-funding. The issue is that these programs, especially the Tech Collective, will run out of funding before the next meetings. There was discussion about how to accomplish this and the process that is required. It was discussed that the committee will have to come back and get more information to be able to vote on this.

Bob Cooper made a motion to recommend to the Executive Committee to extend the contract of the Tech Collective through September 30th and increased by an amount not to exceed \$25,000. This contract will be extended for the 2009 year for one month at a rate equal to 1/12 of the annual Year 3 allotment until the Strategic Development Committee meets again in September. Nancy Roderick seconded it. There was discussion about more info being needed and meeting again so that this might be passed on to the Executive Committee. This voting item was tabled until the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS: There was no old business brought before the committee.

NEW BUSINESS: There was no new business brought before the committee.

VOTE: Bob Cooper motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 AM.

Nancy Roderick seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The next meeting of the Strategic Development Committee is scheduled for June 1, 2009 at 8:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Rose

Administrative Assistant